

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated December 19, 2005 in which claims 1-20 were initially rejected. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims in view of the above-amendments and the following remarks.

I. CLAIM OBJECTIONS

The Office Action objected to claims 1 and 2. In claim 1, the Office Action suggested that the "characteristics of the IP" and the "characteristics of the IC" need to be clarified. Accordingly, the phrase "characteristics of the IP" is re-written as "physical characteristics of the IP."

As described on page 3, line 16 to page 4, line 3, each piece of IP has a set of physical characteristics that are associated with it. These physical characteristics can include operating frequency, area, metal utilization, porosity, congestion, etc. FIG. 2 and page 8, lines 12-18 provide a further list of characteristics of the IP that can be taken into and consideration in one or more embodiments of the present invention. Other physical characteristics can be used by the process of independent claim 1 in addition to or in replace of any one or more of the characteristics listed above.

Thus, the phrase "physical characteristic of the IP" in claim 1 is sufficiently definite, and Applicants respectfully request that the object to claim 1 be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 2, the Office Action suggested that the "acceptable characteristics" should refer to either the "characteristics of the IP" or the "characteristics of the IC" in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 2 is amended to clarify that the "acceptable characteristics" are characteristics of the IP.

In addition, claim 1 is amended to replace the "characteristics of the IC" with --context of the IC-- to better

match terms used in the preamble and to better distinguish from the terms referring to the physical characteristics of the IP.

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER §102(e)

Claims 1-20 were rejected under §102(e) as being anticipated by Chang et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,725,432.

With this Amendment, independent claim 1 is amended to include the elements of dependent 9. Independent claim 1 now includes the steps of identifying a plurality of anchor points in the IC and repeating steps (b)-(e) for each anchor point.

Thus, in one embodiment, for each anchor point of the particular IP being characterized, the process of claim 1 will modify the bounding constraints on the physical characteristics of the IP to improve those physical characteristics within the context of the pre-defined IC.

Chang et al. disclose a method and apparatus for selecting a plurality of pre-designed circuit blocks to be used to design a circuit system, including collecting data reflecting the experience of the designer regarding the pre-designed circuit blocks. The Office Action refers Applicants' attention to Chang et al. column 8, line 43, to column 9, line 19.

Neither this citation nor Chang et al. as a whole support the rejection. Chang et al. do not anticipate iteratively repeating the steps of defining bounding constraints for physical characteristics of the IP, physically synthesizing the IP using the bounding constraints, testing the physical characteristics of the synthesized IP and using the test results to modify the bounding constraints to improve the physical characteristics of the IP for each of a plurality of anchor points. Chang et al. do not disclose such a process. Independent claim 11 includes similar limitations.

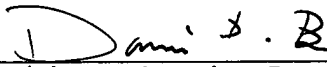
Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 and 11 (and their respective dependent claims) under §102(e) based on Chang et al. be withdrawn.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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